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A CAHNERS/R.R. BOWKER PUBLICATION

THE INTERNATIONAL NEWS MAGAZINE OF BOOK PUBLISHING

JUNE 21, 1991

\$2.50



#BX8DDDB ***** 5-DIGIT 20814
#CNG9ESS201029149# 0654
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Publishers Weekly

VOLUME 238 NUMBER 27

THE INTERNATIONAL NEWS MAGAZINE OF BOOK PUBLISHING

JUNE 21, 1991

ISSN 0000-0019

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SENIOR PRODUCTION EDITOR

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ASSISTANT TO THE PUBLISHER

Esther Reid (212) 463-6812

EDITORIAL INQUIRIES: (212) 463-6758

PRODUCTION DIRECTOR

Sharon Goodman

PRODUCTION MANAGER

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ASSISTANT PRODUCTION MANAGER

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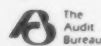
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FEATURES

Going Dutch 19

Wolters Kluwer and Elsevier are quietly building
PSP empires on both sides of the Atlantic

By Gayle Feldman

Whither Custom Textbook Publishing? 27

By Robert E. Baensch

PW International S1-S16

Milan: A World of Change ... Commentary: Publishing
Education ... Making Connections: The 15th Jerusalem
International Book Fair ... Aspen Institute Forum:
What East Europe Needs

DEPARTMENTS

NEWS OF THE WEEK 13

Supreme Court Refuses

To Review 'Immuno'

Letter-to-Editor Case

Paramount Posts \$55 Million

Loss with 'Seasonal' Drops

At S & S

Reed's 26.6% Pretax Profit

Drop Seen with Mitigating

Factors

Retail Sales Rise 7.4%

In Quarter

Survey of Small Publishers

Shows Profits Rise

Despite Recession

Winner of \$500,000 Turner

Award Comments on Judging

Controversy

Ann Godoff Named an Execu-

tive Editor at Random House

PUBNET Permissions for

Course Anthologies Set for

Test Launch

Ralph Oman and Scott Turow

Voice Reservations on

Fair-Use Proposals

W. H. Smith Raises Cash,

Some Set for U.S., in

Expansion Program

Berlitz Gets Publication Rights

To Penguin Travel Guides

Real Comet Press Ceases

Frontlist Publishing

Publishing Delegation Forming
To Visit U.S.S.R. and
Eastern Europe

TRADE NEWS 29

In California, New Faces &

Old Hands Turn to

The Environment

Norton Asks, 'Which Side

Are You On?' in August

'The War' Through the Eyes

Of a Young Confederate

CHILDREN'S BOOK SCENE .. 31

CTW to Launch \$20-Million

TV-Based Literacy Project

BOOK DESIGN &

MANUFACTURING 34

Going to School with

York Graphics

RELIGIOUS PUBLISHING 37

Catholic Publishing:

A Diversity of Concerns

PW INTERVIEWS 44

Stephen Dobyns

FORECASTS 46

Nonfiction 46

Fiction 51

Paperbacks 55

How-To Books 59

Children's Books 64

COLUMNS

Highlights 11

Editorial 12

People 18

Rights 33

Independent Publishing ... 39

Talk of the Trade 40

Paperback Bestsellers 42

Hardcover Bestsellers 43

Weekly Exchange 68

Religious Bestsellers 72

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Recent Survey Shows Today's Children Have Deep Pockets

Booksellers and publishers take note: American children ages 4-12 are a powerful group of consumers, spending more money and shopping more often than ever before. Children's buying habits reflect their current tastes, the trends in their leisure activities and the amount of money at their disposal. The statistics below highlight the results of recent studies conducted by James U. McNeal, a marketing professor at Texas A & M University, whose research focuses on the consumer behavior of children. His results did not specifically cover books as purchases, but are suggestive nonetheless.

Where the Money Comes From

- American children spent over \$6 billion in 1989, 41% more than in 1984.
- Four-year-olds spend an average of 83¢ per week; six-year-olds spend \$2.59 per week. By age 12, children spend \$6.90 each.
- Children ages 4-12 receive 15% of their money as gifts from their parents and 15% from household chores. Twelve percent of their money comes from work they do outside the home; 5% is gifts from relatives or friends. Overall, 83% of children's money comes from home, while 17% comes from outside the home.
- Children in 1989 were better savers than in 1984. They saved more than \$2.6 billion in 1989, or 30.5% of their income.
- Four-year-olds are the biggest savers: they save over 50% of their income. As children grow, the savings rate declines—to 37% at age five, 27% at age six and 17% at age seven. Then the rate increases and levels off at about 30% for children ages 9-12.
- The overall savings rate of 30.5% is the highest recorded for children in two decades.

How They Spend It

- Children ages 4-12 spend nearly \$2 billion a year on candy, soft drinks and other snacks. They spend \$1.9 billion on toys, games and crafts.
- They spend about \$700 million per year on clothing. The clothes that children buy with their own money tend to be brands or styles that parents consider too expensive.
- Children also spend \$600 million a

year on movies, spectator sports and live entertainment; \$486 million in video arcades and on video games; and \$264 million for "other" expenditures (approximately one-half for such items as TVs, portable stereos, telephones and video game sets; the rest for cosmetics and fragrances, cassette tapes and compact discs, movie rentals, stamp and coin collections and mail-order purchases).

To Market, to Market

- Children begin to visit stores on their own before they start grade school. One-half of six-year-olds

make purchases in at least one store a week. About three-quarters of seven-to-nine-year-olds make independent trips to stores, visiting an average of two stores per week.

- By age 10, all children buy things on their own at least twice a week and in at least two different stores. A 10-year-old averages about five visits per week to five different stores, or 250 store visits a year.

- Young children enjoy going to supermarkets and convenience stores most because these stores are familiar to them. Older children enjoy going to music and toy stores and to discount houses.

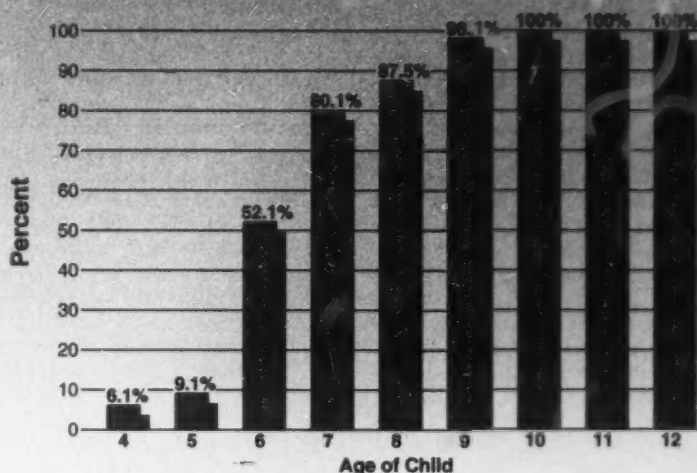
In the Piggy Bank

Annual Per Capita and National Total Income, Spending and Savings for Children Ages 4-12

Annual Per Capita	1989	1984	Percent Change
Income	\$229.84	\$157.56	45.9%
Spending	159.64	141.44	12.9
Savings	70.20	16.12	335.5
National Total (in millions)			
Income	\$8642	\$4730	82.7%
Spending	6002	4246	41.4
Savings	2640	484	445.5

Source: James U. McNeal

Percentage of Children Ages 4-12 Making Independent Trips to Stores



Source: James U. McNeal and Chyon-Hwa Yeh

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INDEX TO ADVERTISERS

R.R. Bowker	41
Fine, Donald	10
S. Fischer Verlag	17
Gruppo Editoriale Fabbri Bompiani Sonzogno Etas	S16
Prentice Hall	Cvr 4
RCS Rizzoli Libri	S2
Science Press	26
Sperling & Kupfer	S7-S9
Stanford Professional Publishing Course	21
Viking Press	47
Warner Books	Cvr 1,2 p.1-8
Wiley, John & Sons	Cvr 3

*This index is provided as a service. The Publisher does not assume any
liability for errors or omissions.*

Publishers Weekly (ISSN 0000-0019) RPUA 123397457 is published weekly with the exception of the last week in December and with additional issues in January, February and August. Second class postage paid at New York, NY and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to **Publishers Weekly**, P.O. Box 1979, Marion, OH 43302. All editorial and advertising correspondence should be addressed to the office of publication: **Publishers Weekly**, 249 West 17th St., New York, NY 10011; telephone: 212/645-0067; telex: 12-7703; fax: 212/242-7216. Address circulation correspondence and changes of address to **Publishers Weekly**, P.O. Box 1979, Marion, OH 43302; telephone 1-800-842-1000; in Canada and all other countries, telephone: 1-614-382-3322. Printed in USA. SUBSCRIPTION PRICES: U.S.A.: 1 year \$119, 2 years \$199, 3 years \$279. Canada: 1 year \$177, 2 years \$301, 3 years \$425. Air delivery to all other countries: 1 year \$280, 2 years \$442, 3 years \$624. (Remit in U.S. funds only.) **Publishers Weekly** is published by Cahners Publishing Co., a Division of Reed Publishing USA, 275 Washington St., Newton MA 02158-1650. Terrence M. McDermott, President; Frank Sibley, Executive Vice President; Robert T. Brawn, Sr. Vice President/General Manager; Jerry D. Neth, Sr. Vice President/Publishing Operations; J. J. Walsh, Sr. Vice President/Finance; Thomas J. Dellamaria, Sr. Vice President/Production & Manufacturing; Ralph Knupp, Vice President/Human Resources. Bowker Magazine Group is also an affiliate of R. R. Bowker Co. Bob Krakoff, Chairman of the Board; Ira Siegel, President. **Publishers Weekly** is a registered trademark of Reed Properties Inc., used under license. Chairman: Ronald G. Segel, Chairman and CEO; Robert L. Krakoff, President and COO; William M. Platt, Sr. Vice President. Cahners Publishing Company, a Division of Reed Publishing USA □ Specialized Business Magazines for Building & Construction, Research, Technology, Electronics, Computing, Printing, Publishing, Health Care, Foodservice, Packaging, Environmental Engineering, Manufacturing, Entertainment, Home Furnishings, and Interior Design. □ Specialized Consumer Magazines for Child Care, Boating, and Wedding Planning.

SALES OFFICES

249 West 17th Street
New York, N.Y. 10011
FAX: (212) 463-6807
TELEX: 12-7703 RR BOWKER

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Marina Faruolo (212) 463-6807
ASSISTANT PRODUCTION MANAGER
Nancy Campoli (212) 463-6809
CONTRACTS COORDINATOR
Paul Walker (212) 463-6809

NEW YORK
Steve Chasen (212) 463-6809
Lynn Myers (212) 463-6801
Jane Belostock (212) 463-6807
Patricia Fiore (212) 463-6809
John V. Turner (212) 463-6809

MIDWEST
Matthew Hurley (708) 394-3917
Cahners Publishing Company
1250 E. Touhy Ave.
P.O. Box 5060
Des Plaines, Ill. 60017-5060
FAX: (708) 463-6809

WEST
Jim Levitt (818) 786-4341
Lorna Campbell
11921 Vose Street
North Hollywood, Calif. 91605
FAX: (818) 786-4347

SOUTH
Robin Mays (404) 955-4889
Cahners Publishing Company
6520 Powers Ferry Road, Suite 305
Atlanta, Ga. 30339
FAX: (404) 955-3085

CANADA
Claude Choquette (514) 348-3336
The Rights Agency
C.P. 504, Station N
Montreal, Quebec H2X 3M6

FRANCE
Eliane Bonisti (33-1) 43-23-45-49
80 Rue des Saints Peres
75007 Paris, France
TELEX: 260781 P BOWKER

ITALY
Agenzia (02) 463-6807
Letteraria Internazionale
Via Fratelli Gabba, 3
I-20121 Milano, Italy
TELEX: 333074 FAX: 02-463-6807

JAPAN
Tom Mori (81-3) 374-4001
Tuttle-Mori Agency
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